[Translation]

Facility of Two Calls at a Time

279. SHRI SURYA NARAIN YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the facility of making calls to two destinations simultaously has been provided in electronic phones;

(b) if so, whether this facility has been provided in all towns or in Delhi only;

(c) whether the Government propose to provide such facility in all the towns; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V.RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) No, Sir. However, a facility called conference call is available in a limited way on charge basis in E. 10B exchanges where a subscriber 'A' while talking with subscriber 'B' can set up a call to subscriber 'C' and all the three subscribers, 'A' , 'B' and 'C' may have conference between them.

(b) This facility is available in all E 10B exchanges throughout the country.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b).

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Closure of Cinema Houses in the Country

2792. SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question No. 4871 dated August 28,1991 and state:

(a) whether a number of cinema houses in the country are getting closed in the last four of five years and some of these have been demolished while others are on the way;

(b) whether the Government are aware of the reasons for their closure; and

(c) the action Government propose to take to bring out the Cinema Industry out of this crisis?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) to (c). Closure of few cinema houses in the country are being reported due to the escalation in maintenance costs of big cinema theatres, increase in entertainment tax levels and due to video piracy and Cable TV. The combined impact of the aforesaid causes have led to a situation where theatres quite apart from upgrading or even maintaining the decor which a custom expects from a cinema theatre are not able to modernize their exhibition and acoustics technology. Government is fully seized of these problems. Although, the cinema theatres are in private hands, Government have already taken measures to help the cinema industry. The steps taken are as follows:-

1) Government have repeatedly written to the State Governments to curb the menace of video piracy. Letters have been written by Ministers of Information and Broadcasting also. The letters have been nagar sent on 19/2/90,15/3/90,26/12/90,30/1/91,8/2/91,19/2/91,5/3/91,29/5/9,4/6/91,26/6/91 and 9/7/91.

2) An effective method of controlling video piracy is to simultaneously release a large number of prints of films, country-

wide. To facilitate this, the Central Government abolished the excise duty on release prints with effect from 31/3/90. This gave a benefit of Rs. 9 crore to the film industry.

3) For simultaneous release of more prints as well as to reduce the impact of the spiralling increase of imported sine colour positive raw stock prices, the customs duty on jumbo rolls of this raw stock was reduced in this year's budget by 55% (from 90% it was reduced to 35%) This has given considerable fillip to the film economy.

4) Entertainment Tax which is a State subject is attaining high levels. The Central Government has been repeatedly requesting the States to rationalise the levels of entertainment tax in order to enable the cinema houses to revive and modernize the cinema theatres.

[*Translation*]

Letter Boxes in Railway Mail Service Coaches

2793. SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether previously letter boxes were installed inside Railway Mail Service coaches;

(b) if so , when this facility was withdrawn and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to restore this facility and if so, and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V.RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir. In built letter boxes are provided outside RMS Postal Vans to facilitate public to post letters therein.

(b) This facility countinue and has not been withdrawn.

(c) and (d) In view of (b) above questions do not arise.

Telephone facilities to Panchayats in Bihar

2794. SHRI RM LAKHAN SINGH YADAV: SHRI RAM TAHAL CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) wheh the scheme to provide telephone facility to each Gram panchayat was introduced; and

(b) the details of telephone connections provided so far to the gram panchayats in Biahr, district wise?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) January, 1991.

(b) The total number of telephone provided in Panchayat villages as on 30.11.1991 is 5,140. The district wise information will be placed on the Table of the House.

Introduction of family register in States

2795. SHRI RAM SHARAN YADAV: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of States where family register has been introduced as far in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; and